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INDIAN MINORITIES IN SOUTH AND EAST ASIA:
THE BACKGROUND OF THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT
OUTSIDE INDIA

A survey of Indian populations in South
and East Asia as a basis for estimating the probable
strength of the Japanese-sponsored Indian Independ-
ence movement.

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INDIAN MINORITIES IN SOUTH AND EAST ASIA:
THE BACKGROUND OF THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

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SUMMARY

The Indian Independence Leagues in South East Asia, as far as manpower is concerned, have in several areas a large population upon which to draw for membership. Indians are most numerous in Burma and Malaya, where they form a considerable proportion of the laboring class. There is also a fairly large group in the N.E.I. In Thailand and Indochina the Indians are a rather small, compact merchant community with the laboring class a relatively insignificant minority in the Indian group. The Indians in China are settled chiefly in Hongkong and Shanghai. Their number is small and for the most part they are former members of the police force or army who remained in China when their term of service was completed. The Indian population of Japan consisted of a small group of merchants settled in the principal cities. There were in addition a number of students and a few exiled Indian patriots.

In all of these areas Indian males greatly outnumber the females, and a large proportion of them are between the ages of 15 and 35. Although the population of Indians born in the country of enumeration is increasing, Indians in all countries of South East Asia are largely immigrants who return after a period to the country of their birth. In 1931 for example, four-fifths of the Indian population of Malaya had ✓ been born outside the country; the figure for Burma in the same year was 62 percent. A certain index to the immigrant nature of the population, and its temporary character, is the sex ratio.

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There is no indication that the majority of these Indians took any interest in Indian political problems. In Burma, before its separation from India, there was a provincial committee of the Indian National Congress. It is probable that the members were drawn from the professional, educated classes among the Indians of Rangoon, and that the laborers who formed the bulk of the population had no part in the organization. On the whole, Indian organizations in Burma and Malaya had as their objective the economic and social advancement of Indians in these countries. In Thailand and Indochina, Indian societies were probably business associations or social clubs. Certainly in Thailand and perhaps in Indochina as well there were a few Indians who were interested in the Indian struggle for freedom but they seem to have made little headway among their fellow countrymen.

The situation in China seems to have been somewhat different. The Indians formed a small, compact group largely belonging to the Sikh community. A revolutionary movement, dating from the years of the last war, fed by resentment against the British and influenced by Chinese nationalist activities, flourished in Shanghai. The roots of this movement lay not in present-day Indian nationalism with its creed of non-violence and civil-disobedience, but in the older terrorism which long ago ceased to play a part in Indian politics. In recent years, however, the activities of the Indians in Shanghai have been

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increasingly inspired by the Indian National Congress.

Japan has a smaller Indian population than any other country in East Asia. Nevertheless the presence in Japan of a small group of Indian revolutionaries and the fact that they have received encouragement and support from the Japanese, has made Japan the center of Indian nationalist activities in eastern Asia. Several associations were devoted to the cause of Indian independence and the degree of organization for this purpose surpassed anything achieved or attempted in other countries of eastern Asia.

It seems clear that the Indian Independence Leagues have not been built up on the basis of pre-existing nationalist organizations in South East Asia. Nor is it likely that there was any widespread demand on the part of Indians in this area that the war be made the occasion of obtaining India's freedom, although a few Indians in Japan, such as Rash Behari Bose, probably regard the present war as the opportunity missed in 1914-18.

The Independence Leagues are, then, the creation of the Japanese. There is very little reliable information regarding the degree to which the Japanese have been successful in enlisting the support of Indians in this movement. There were doubtless in each country a few Indians ready to respond to appeals to their patriotism. It is likely that Japanese anti-British propaganda would prove effective especially in Burma and Malaya; and "Asia for the Asiatics" is an old and attractive slogan throughout the area. Pro-Japanese sentiments dating from the Russo-Japanese war

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provided a basis upon which to erect Japanese-sponsored organizations directed toward the achievement, with Japanese aid, of national status for India. There is no reason to believe that politically intelligent Indians in the area would have had many qualms about accepting such aid, and if Japan's ultimate intentions were ever called into question, it is probable that few Indians would have been found to prefer British to Japanese domination. Furthermore, in the early years of the war Japan appeared to have established herself firmly in South Eastern Asia. Britain's defeat in India must have seemed to those Indians who were informed as to the course of events, a matter of months merely. Expedi-✓
ency demanded that they cooperate with the Japanese. It is probable also that the Japanese resorted to coercion when persuasion failed. It has been reported, for instance, that the Indian merchants in Bangkok were forced, by threat of boycott, to provide funds for the League, and there have been statements to the effect that prisoners of war volunteered for service in the Independence Army to escape torture at the hands of their captors.

A notice in the Shanghai Times, 22 January 1944, states "In order to make a complete official list, all Indian nationals who have not yet registered with the Indian Independence League are urgently requested to register before the end of the month, otherwise much inconvenience may arise to the defaulters." It would seem that the Indians of Shanghai have not been in a hurry to join the League and the mention of "inconvenience"

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suggests that enrollment is not altogether a voluntary matter.

The appearance of Subhas Bose on the scene gave a great impetus to the movement. A former Congress President with a large following in India, an able leader, widely considered to be a sincere patriot, he would have had little difficulty in persuading even the hesitant that an opportunity was at hand to drive the British from India. Generally speaking, it may be concluded that the Japanese have been successful in mobilizing Indian opinion in their favor.

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

[Illegible text follows]

INDIAN MINORITIES IN SOUTH AND EAST ASIA:
THE BACKGROUND OF THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

In all countries of South and East Asia now occupied or controlled by the Japanese the Indian residents have organized Independence Leagues, the purpose of which is to free India, with the aid of the Japanese, from British domination. These Leagues were established under Japanese sponsorship in the early days of the war, and by June 1942, when representatives met for a conference at Bangkok, a large membership was claimed for each country. Increased activity followed the arrival of Subhas Bose a year later. Chief in importance was the formation of the Independence Army, composed of Indian volunteers.

In order to assess the potentialities of this movement, it is essential to have available the facts concerning the Indian populations of these areas: vital statistics; social and economic position; the degree to which Indians were organized before the war, and for what purpose; contacts with nationalist and other groups in India; attitudes towards Japan. The following account of Indians in South and East Asia attempts, insofar as possible, to provide the facts.

I. INDIANS IN BURMA

A. Population Statistics

Politically a part of India until 1937, Burma had a large Indian population. According to the most recent estimate available, Indians in Burma numbered 1,017,825.¹ The 1941 figure would be somewhat higher. Since roughly 400,000 Indians escaped from Burma at the time of the Japanese invasion, the present Indian population is probably between six and eight hundred thousand.

1. Geographic Distribution. The following account of the distribution of the Indians in Burma is taken from the 1931 census. At that time 93 percent of the total number of Indians were concentrated in the delta, coast and center subdivisions. Forty-two percent lived in Rangoon and Akyab district. In Rangoon, Indians formed 53 percent of the population and in Akyab district, 33 percent. In northern Burma the number of Indians was small except for Myitkyina district where there were 17,000; a large number of these were Gurkhas who had settled there, and in addition there was a considerable number of Indians among the military police.

2. Racial Affiliations. The following table classifies Indians by race:²

<u>Race</u>	<u>Number of Persons</u>	<u>Number per thousand persons</u>
Bengali	65,211	64
Chittagonian	252,152	248
Hindustani	174,967	172

1 Census of India 1931, Vol. II, Burma

2 Ibid., Pt. 1, p. 227

Table cont'd.

<u>Race</u>	<u>Number of Persons</u>	<u>Number per thousand persons</u>
Tamil	149,888	147
Telugu	159,759	157
Oriya	62,585	61
Others	153,263	151

"Others" include 39,532 Gurkhas and 28,289 Punjabis.

The largest single group is the Chittagonian, of which 74 percent were located in Akyab district. Over 50 percent of the Indian population were from North India. Tamils and Telugus together constituted less than 33 percent.

3. Birthplace. The majority of Indians in Burma are immigrants to the country. In 1931, 62 percent of the total number of Indians in Burma had been born outside the country. However, the district of Akyab presents a striking contrast to conditions elsewhere in Burma: in that district only 21 percent had been born outside Burma. There is also a considerable difference in the percentages for males and for females. For Burma as a whole 72 percent of the males had been born outside Burma, while only 36 percent of the Indian females were foreign born. Here again Akyab is not typical of Burma as a whole: 30 percent of the males, and 7 percent of the females were born outside Burma.

It is interesting to contrast the racial classification of Indian immigrants with that of the Indian population of Burma as a whole.¹

¹ op. cit., p. 62

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<u>Race</u>	<u>Persons</u>
Bengali	39,809
Chittagonian	83,511
Hindustani	125,054
Oriya	57,906
Tamil	84,327
Telugu	131,727
Others	107,757

It will be noted that while the largest single group of Indians in Burma is composed of Chittagonians, the Telugus form the largest single group among Indian immigrants to Burma.

4. Sex and Age Grouping. The sex ratio for Indians in Burma is typical of an immigrant population. In 1931 there were 387 females per thousand males. For the Indian immigrant group considered separately the sex ratio was 191. The various racial groups among the immigrants differ considerably in this respect. The Tamils had the highest sex ratio with 43 females per 100 males; the figure for the Telugus was 21; for Bengalis 13; for Oriyas 3.

The age distribution per 10,000 Indians is indicated in the following table. The district of Akyab is omitted in the calculations since "figures for the whole province would be representative neither of the Akyab district nor of the remainder of the province."¹

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Whole Province less Akyab district</u>	
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
0 - 5	565	1,732
5 - 10	535	1,292
10 - 15	576	1,085
15 - 20	1,023	1,030

¹ op. cit., p. 77

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Table cont'd.

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Whole Province less Akyab district</u>	
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
20 - 30	3,051	2,227
30 - 40	2,389	1,363
40 and over	1,861	1,269

5. Religious Groups. The following table classifies Indians by religion.¹

<u>Religion</u>	<u>Actual Population</u>			<u>Per 1,000 Persons</u>
	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	
Hindu	565,609	425,389	140,220	556
Muslim	396,594	271,514	125,080	390
Buddhist	12,600	9,778	2,822	12
Christian	30,135	18,015	12,120	30
Sikh	10,896	7,882	3,014	11
Others	1,991	1,333	658	2

It is important to note that over half the Indian population is Hindu by religion. Muslims form the only other large group. Another fact of some importance is the large number of female Muslims compared to the proportion of females to males in the other religious groups. It appears that this is largely due to the inclusion of Akyab district in the enumeration; in this district, where many of the Indian Muslims are permanent residents, the sex ratio is 787, while it is only 246 for the rest of the country. The overall figures for Muslim females given in the table above are therefore misleading: with the exception of Akyab district the proportion among Indian Muslims is one female to every four males, while among Indian Hindus, there is one female per 3 males.

¹ op. cit., p. 227

6. Occupation. The following table shows the chief occupations of Indians in Burma:¹

<u>Occupations</u>	<u>Indians Born in Burma</u>	<u>Indians Born Outside Burma</u>
Exploitation of animals and vegetation	67,366	108,842
Exploitation of minerals	402	14,350
Industry	7,178	97,489
Transport	5,510	96,020
Trade	9,151	87,060
Public Force	617	13,378
Public Administration	1,012	12,810
Professions and Liberal Arts	1,593	8,825
Persons living on their income	283	1,546
Domestic Service	2,339	21,687

The table given below brings out more clearly the difference with respect to occupation between Indians born in Burma and those born outside.² The distribution by occupation of 1,000 workers is indicated.

<u>Occupations</u>	<u>Indians Born in Burma</u>	<u>Indians Born Outside Burma</u>
Production of raw materials	486	249
Preparation and supply of material substances	374	578
Public Administration and Liberal Arts	55	75
Miscellaneous	86	98

It is possible to make a rough classification of racial groups by occupation. Bengalis as a rule are employed in government service or work in a clerical capacity, while some are shopkeepers or traders; in addition a number of Bengalis are mechanics. The Chittagonians are engaged in small craft traffic and furnish labor for ships and launch crew;

¹ op. cit., pt. 2, p. 186

² Taken from a table in pt. 1, p. 134 of the Census

many of this group work in mills and dockyards. The Tamils are usually engaged in agriculture or work in the rice mills, but middle class members of this group are employed in various clerical activities. A small but very important minority among the Tamils are the Chettyars, the money-lenders and the principal financing agency in the country. Telugus for the most part work in mills and factories, though many are rickshaw pullers, porters and carriers. Hindustanis from the United Provinces serve as watchmen and messengers, and many are petty vendors. The Oriyas work on railroads and in the Public Works Department on road construction; some are engaged in mills and dockyards. Gurkhas are generally cultivators, though some are to be found in domestic service. Punjabis work largely in railway and motor workshops, dockyards and foundries as mechanics and overseers.¹

7. Summary. The Indian population in Burma is largely an immigrant group composed chiefly of people from the southern and northeastern parts of India. The Indians are for the most part concentrated in southern and central Burma, and nearly one half of them were in Akyab and Rangoon. Both the age grouping, which shows a majority between the ages of 15 and 40, and the sex ratio, with a great preponderance of males, are typical of an immigrant group. Over half of the Indians are Hindus, and Muslims who are largely located in Akyab district, are next in respect to numbers. Indians generally speaking, are laborers, though an appreciable number of immigrants are engaged in administrative and professional activities.

1 cf. E.J.L. Andrews, Indian Labour in Rangoon, Calcutta, 1933, p. 35-37

B. Relations between Burmans and Indians

A fact of outstanding importance in considering the position of Indians in Burma is the hostility of the Burmans towards the Indian immigrants and residents in the country. This hostility has an economic base and has been intensified since 1930 due largely to the economic depression and to the fact that rising Burman nationalism has tended to make capital of economic grievances and the exploitation of Burman resources by foreign elements. This hostility was never veiled, and in 1938 severe riots broke out in which Indian lives and property suffered at the hands of the Burmans. The Riot Inquiry Committee in discussing the causes of the disturbances drew attention to the fact that while in 1930 Indian Chettiars occupied 6 percent of the total occupied area in the thirteen principal rice-growing districts of Lower Burma, in 1937 they had acquired possession of 25 percent. This did not take into account the areas over which the Chettiars held mortgages.¹ The city of Rangoon and its business was to a large extent in Indian hands. Indian owners and landlords paid over 55 percent of the total taxes of the city, and all large private bazaars were Indian-owned.² The depression resulted in a drain on the resources of the poorer class of Burmans who were forced to turn to industries where Indians were already established, and this led to additional dissatisfaction.

Another grievance against the Indians was the problem created by intermarriage between Burman women and Indian men. Objections on the

1 cf. Interim Report of the Riot Inquiry Committee, Rangoon, 1939, p. 12

2 op. cit., p. 17

part of Burmans to such marriages were based "sometimes on the ground of the race purity of the Burmese nation, sometimes on the fear that mixed marriage may tend to remove a portion of the population from Burmese nationality and from the national religion and sometimes on the ground that it results in material hardship."¹ Under Burmese law a widow fares better than under either Muslim or Hindu law. The question of the Burman woman's status was also involved; since laws pertaining to marriage differed, a Buddhist Burman woman might consider herself a married woman under Buddhist law, but would not be so considered under either Hindu or Muslim law.

Burmese nationalism has made an issue of the position of Indians in Burma since 1916. When the separation of Burma from India came up for discussion in 1932-33 "the whole question of Indians in Burma was thrown into the political arena, attention became focussed upon it, and the whole question...received a prominence and a reality which it never before assumed and possibly does not deserve....It was continuously represented as a menace to Burma's national life and even to the Buddhist religion."²

Indians in Burma, and this applies to those domiciled in the country rather than to the shifting immigrant population, were conscious of being a racial minority and jealous of their status as a separate

¹ op. cit., p. 33

² op. cit., p. 23

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political group. Indians had formed a separate electorate as early as 1922, and at the Round Table Conference in London in 1931-32 the Indian delegates demanded that separate electorates be continued to safeguard their interests. This insistence and the separate electorate in the present constitution were contrary to Burman desires.

C. Indian Organization

It is probably a safe assumption that members of the laboring classes had few definite opinions regarding political affairs in India. The majority of the educated Indians in Burma appear to have sympathized with the aims of the Indian National Congress. With few exceptions the Indian owned and edited newspapers were pro-Congress, though moderate in tone. Burma had its own provincial Congress Committee, the members of which were nearly all Indians, and delegates regularly attended the annual conference of the Congress. After the separation of Burma, the provincial committee was abolished and in its place the Burma Committee was set up to work for the freedom of Burma.¹ This committee continued to elect members to the All India Congress Committee and in 1939 two Indians and one Burman, all from Rangoon, were elected.

Other Indian organizations included the All Burman Muslim League, and the Burman Provincial Hindu Sabha, founded in 1930. It is not known whether or not these were branches of National organizations in India; the All Burman Muslim League appears to have had

1 cf. Modern Review, March 1938, p. 370

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some connection with the All India Muslim League, but probably was not directly affiliated with it. The Young Chulia Muslim League was an organization of Tamil Muslims from Madras. Another organization was the All Burma South Indian Association. Most of these groups appear to have been concerned mainly with the advancement of Indians in Burma, and the improvement of their social and economic status.

II. INDIANS IN THAILAND

A. Population Statistics

It is impossible to state accurately the number of Indians living in Thailand. According to the 1931 Census of Thailand, Indians and Malays together numbered 379,618. Since 272,484 of these were located in Pattani Circle, an area adjoining Malaya, presumably the great majority of the total number are Malays.¹ Dr. Lanka Sundaram, who spent some time investigating the condition of Indians in Thailand, estimated that there were 100,000 in the country. His figure included Burmese Indians and Karens² but even if allowance is made for a possible total of 50,000 Karens³ this figure seems high. A brief account of the Indians in Thailand published in the Indian Review⁴ gives 10,000 as the total Indian population. The Indian Year

1 Statistical Yearbook of the Kingdom of Siam 1931-33. Bangkok, 1933, p. 67

2 cf. Radhakamal Mukerjee, Le Migrazioni Asiatiche, Rome 1936, pp. 32 and 212

3 cf. H.I. Marshall, The Karen People of Burma. Columbus 1922, p. 3

4 September 1935, p. 623

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Book for 1940-41 states that there are approximately 5,000 Indians in Thailand and the same figure is given in the Indians Abroad Directory by S. A. Waiz.¹ Some figures from the Statistical Yearbook of the Kingdom of Siam may be considered as evidence favoring acceptance of the last estimate as more nearly correct. The numbers of Indians arriving at the Port of Bangkok from 1918 to 1933 are listed in Table 18.² The figures vary from 708 in 1919-20 to 293 in 1919-32; generally from 300 to 500 Indians per year entered Thailand during this period. Table 19 lists departures from Bangkok during the same period. The number of Indians leaving Thailand by the port of Bangkok varied from 250 in 1927-28 to 600 in 1925-26. Table 20 lists arrivals of aliens at Bangkok, and presumably included persons arriving overland, probably from Malaya, as well as by sea. In 1931-32 the number of Indian arrivals was 1,333; in 1932-33, 1,195. These figures do not support an estimate of 100,000 Indians resident in Thailand. Five thousand may probably be considered a reasonable minimum, with 10,000 as the outside limit.

Little can be said concerning the place of origin of these Indians. Virginia Thompson³ states that two-thirds of the Indian

1 cf. Radhakamal Mukerjee, Le Migrazioni Asiatiche, p. 212. Waiz's book, published in Bombay 1933 is not available for reference in this country.

2 Statistical Yearbook, op. cit., p. 84

3 Thailand: The New Siam, New York 1941, p. 139

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merchants were Tamils from south India, while the other third were speakers of Hindustani. It is evident from her account that there were also some Sikhs. Mukerjee mentions "a fair number of South Indians" and "a few Muhammadan agriculturists from Eastern Bengal" who entered Thailand by way of Burma.¹

Of 1,333 Indians arriving in Bangkok during the year 1931-32, 894 were married males, 284 were unmarried, adult males. There were only 49 married females, and 17 unmarried females over 15 years of age. The largest number of Indian males (410) were between the ages of 25-35; 775 were between the ages of 15 and 25. There were only 19 males aged 65 and over, and children under 7 years numbered only 44. Although these data refer to only a section of the Indian population, they suggest that the average Indian immigrant is a male, that he comes to Thailand at the age of 25; and it is possible to infer from the scarcity of women and children among the immigrants that the average Indian resident of Thailand is a transient who regards India as his home and expects to return after a few years. It should be noted, however, that two Thai informants, Dang Tilaka and Tularaksa stated in conversation that Indians in Thailand regard themselves as Thai rather than as Indians and have become permanent residents of the country. It seems probable that this observation refers chiefly to second generation Indians.

1 op. cit., p. 114

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B. Economic Status

The majority of the Indians in Thailand are merchants. A few, probably Sikhs, are employed in the Bangkok police force; others serve as watchmen and messenger boys.¹ The Yearbook for the Kingdom of Siam lists the occupations of 1,178 male Indians aged 15 or over who arrived in Thailand during 1931-32:

General Laborers	8
Professional	57
Commercial	583
Agricultural, etc.	2
Personal and Domestic	371
Theatrical, etc.	7
Others	150

Some, at least, of the Indians are well to do. A. E. Nana and Bhagwan Singh are said to be among the largest landowners in Thailand.² The Sikh community in 1933 spent Tcs. 80,000 (\$35,200) to build a temple in Bangkok.³

C. Indian Organizations

There were two Indian organizations in Thailand. The Indian Association of Siam was founded in 1930⁴ and A. E. Nana became its life president with Hira Lall as secretary. Baboo Chhangur Singh was president of the second organization, the Hindu Dharma Sabha (Hindu Religious Society). There was also the Thai-Indian Cultural Lodge, founded by

1 Virginia Thompson, op. cit., p. 139

2 Information provided by Mr. Tilaka and Mr. Tularaksa

3 Virginia Thompson, op. cit., p. 140

4 Virginia Thompson, op. cit., p. 140

Swami Satyananda Puri, to foster cultural relations between Thailand and India. It is doubtful whether there were any political organizations as such among the Indians prior to 1941. Messrs. Tilaka and Tularaksa have expressed the opinion that attempts to establish organizations of this type would have been discouraged and that furthermore Indians as a whole were not vitally interested in political developments in their homeland. As followers of Gandhi, Indians sympathized with the Indian National Congress, but there seems to have been no local branch of the Congress in Thailand.

D. Early History of the Indian Independence League in Thailand and its Founders

Many, if not most of the Indians probably regarded the Japanese invasion with some apprehension. Indians and other Asiatic subjects of Great Britain in Thailand were assured by the Japanese that they had nothing to fear. Nevertheless, on 14 and 15 December 1941, about 50 Indians, "including some principal agitators", tried to escape and were arrested. The Bangkok Times in a notice of this affair stated that "in view of the fact that the establishment of an Indian association is being planned to collaborate with the Japanese Army force and because some Indians are enthusiastically cooperating with the Japanese Army force, those who were arrested were especially liberated under the guarantee of the founders of the association."¹ The notice concludes

¹ 16 December 1941

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with a warning that no mercy will be granted in the future.

There were undoubtedly a few individuals in the community who were ardent nationalists with a record of participation in subversive activities in India. The end of 1941 found them eager to take the lead in organizing their countrymen behind the Japanese program. One of these was Giani Pritam Singh, who had been in Thailand since 1933. He was born in Lyallpur district in the Punjab, of a "respectable" Sikh family, and educated at a Sikh missionary college. During the years from 1920-30 he participated in the Akali movement, during the course of which Akali Sikhs came into conflict with the Government of India over questions of religious reform. When in 1930 the government fired upon the Red Shirts, a nationalist group in the North West Frontier Province, Giani Pritam Singh, together with 300 other Akalis, went to Peshawar to protest against the government's action. He was arrested in Gujerat and jailed for a year and a half. It has been stated that while in prison he came into contact with Indian nationalist leaders. In April 1933 he was invited by the Singh Sabha, a Sikh religious organization, to go to Bangkok as a "lecturer", and as far as is known he did not return to India.¹

Another Indian revolutionary in Thailand when Japan entered the war was Amar Singh. During the last war he engaged in seditious activities in India and seems to have been involved in one of the

1 Bangkok Times, 2 April 1942

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various plots to obtain India's freedom with German aid. The Bangkok Times¹ states that "he is the person who acquired 100,000 rifles from Germany during the last great war." In 1917 or 1918 he was imprisoned and sent to the Andamans. After his release in 1940 he went to Thailand where he joined forces with Giani Pritam Singh.² Together they started an anti-British movement in which they are said to have received help from the Japanese government. These two men probably formed the nucleus of what later became known as the Independent League of India. It is doubtful if there was any organization, properly speaking, before the end of 1941. A note in the Bangkok Times for 12 February 1942, says that the Independent League, of which Giani Pritam Singh was the leader, "though it had its origin before [the declaration of war by Japan] did not do any work openly." It is further stated that Giani Pritam Singh "had come to an understanding with the Japanese Government concerning the Independence of India". The entry of Japan in the war found these men anxious to play a more active role. On 9 December 1941, the Bangkok Times carried an advertisement signed by a Representative of the Independent League of India: "Attention all Indian residents in Thailand. All patriotic Indians who wish to serve

1 7 February 1942

2 Bangkok Times, 2 April 1942

their Motherland India are requested to enlist their respective names at 1840 (Green House) Saphan Maha Megh." Two days later the same newspaper contained an appeal to Indians to look to Japan to free India. This was signed by "Diarni Pistan Singh", very probably a garble for Giani Pritam Singh.¹

A third Indian who achieved considerable prominence in the early days of the war with Japan was Swami Satyananda Puri. Profulla Kumar Sen, as he was named, was born in 1902 in Bengal. He was educated at Calcutta University where he obtained the degree of M.A. During his student days he was a member of the Anushilan Samiti, a society for the promotion of culture and training, which, however, functioned chiefly as an organization "to arouse public opinion against the Government by circulating seditious literature, popularizing revolutionary songs, and organizing secret associations."² His connections with this group landed him in jail. While still a young man he became a follower of Tagore and Gandhi. He decided to become a sannyasi (holy man), and having made over his entire property to the National Congress, wandered about in India for four years and spent another three years meditating in the Himalayas. He was afterwards appointed Professor of Oriental Philosophy at Calcutta University and held this post for two years, during which time he founded the Society of Oriental Culture. In 1932

¹ Bangkok Times, 11 December 1941

² W. R. Smith, Nationalism and Reform in India, New Haven, 1938, p. 72

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Tagore was requested by the Royal Family of Thailand to send an Indian as unofficial cultural ambassador to Thailand. Tagore selected Swami Satyananda. While in Thailand, the Swami wrote several books on Indian history, philosophy, etc., as well as a biography of Gandhi in the Thai language. There is no indication that he had any dealings with the Japanese prior to December 1941, nor does he seem to have been associated with Amar Singh and Giani Pritam Singh. On 22 December 1941, Swami Satyananda gave notice in the Bangkok Times of a meeting to inaugurate an Indian National Council for the Freedom of India. The council was formed several days later and the Swami became its president with Debnath Das as secretary. ¹

For some time the two groups, the Independent League of India and the Indian National Council for the Freedom of India, continued as separate organizations. The first appears to have been the more active. Some of its members, including S. Kishan Singh, Babu Sudarshan Aouja, and Bhagwan Singh went to Malaya in December 1941, to do propaganda work among the soldiers of the British Indian army. ² They apparently met with a certain amount of success, but an article in the Bangkok Times comments that some of the soldiers "it seemed, had lost their sense of reason and stayed where they were." ³ Giani Pritam Singh went to Malaya shortly after its fall and was instrumental in founding branches of

1 Bangkok Times, 24 December 1941

2 Bangkok Times, 28 January 1942

3 Loc. cit.

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the League in that country. ¹

Towards the end of March 1942, Swami Satyananda Puri and Giani Pritam Singh were killed en route by air to Japan. In May 1942 the Indian National Council and the Independent League merged; the union is reported to have been brought about by Colonel Gill, "a very senior officer", formerly of the army in Malaya. Debnath Das became general secretary and Amar Singh was made a patron. ²

Such information as is available indicates a general lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Indian community for this Japanese-sponsored organization. It is said that the merchants of Thailand are forced by threat of boycott to become members of the League and to contribute to its funds. Many of them apparently are becoming Thai citizens in order to avoid this pressure.

III. INDIANS IN MALAYA

A. Population Statistics

Indian emigration to Malaya in modern times dates from the beginning of the nineteenth century. Today Indians form over 12 percent of the total population of the country. According to an estimate made in 1937, they numbered 754,849. Detailed information relating to the Indian population, however, is taken from the 1931 Census of British Malaya when the total number of Indians was 624,009. The following table ³

1 op. cit., 27 March 1942

2 Bangkok Times, 15 May 1942

3 taken from Table 1 in A Report on the 1931 Census of British Malaya

shows the distribution of Indians in the political subdivisions of Malaya:

Singapore	51,019
Penang	58,020
Malacca	23,238
Straits Settlements	<u>132,277</u>
Perak	159,152
Selangor	155,924
Negri Sembilan	50,100
Pahang	14,820
Federated Malay States	<u>379,996</u>
Johore	51,038
Kedah	50,824
Perlis	966
Kelantan	6,752
Trengganu	1,371
Brunei	377
Unlocated	408

Following is the Indian population of the principal towns ¹

	<u>Total Population</u>	<u>Indian Population</u>
Singapore	445,719	51,019
Kuala Lumpur	111,738	25,342
Alor Star	11,596	2,746
Penang	149,408	58,020
Taiping	31,881	7,726
Seremban	21,650	4,087
Johore Bahru	21,777	3,220
Ipoh	53,183	12,301

About five-sixths of the total Indian population are Tamils from South India. The following is a tabulation according to sectional groups of the Indians in Malaya. ²

¹ op. cit., Table 17, 18
² op. cit., p. 83

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Tamil	514,959
Telugu	32,541
Malayali	35,125
Punjabi, etc.	31,001
United Provinces	1,898
Bengal, etc.	1,833
Burmese	1,160
Bombay, etc.	1,388
Bihar and Orissa	219
Nepal	490
Other and unidentified	3,395

As regards religion, the great majority are Hindus, as might be expected considering the great preponderance of Tamils in the population. The Mohammedans are also chiefly from southern India, especially the Malabar coast, but in addition there is a number of Pathans, Punjabis, and natives of Bombay and Bengal in the Muslim group. The following table lists Indians by religion.¹

	<u>British Malaya</u>	<u>Straits Settlements</u>	<u>F. M. S.</u>
Hindus	509,202	93,793	322,272
Mohammedans	56,506	24,797	20,184
Sikhs	18,180	4,326	12,117
Christians	36,614	8,507	23,787
Buddhists	1,204	398	562
Others	2,303	456	973

The following table showing age distribution per 1,000 Indians indicates clearly the immigrant nature of the population.²

1 op. cit., p. 89

2 op. cit., p. 65

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<u>Age</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
0-10	136	279
10-20	124	178
20-30	312	290
30-40	275	162
40-50	138	78
Over 55	15	13

As in almost all countries where Indian immigrants are found, the number of males is greatly in excess of the number of females. In 1931 there were 421,028 males and 202,981 females. The several racial groups, however, show wide variation in the sex ratio. Among the Tamils there were 514 females per 1,000 males; for the Telugu, the figure was 717; for the Malayali, 209; for the Punjabi, 263.

In British Malaya as a whole, about one-fifth of the Indian population is Malaya born. It has been reliably estimated that the "average duration of the southern Indian's continuous stay in Malaya is under three years." ¹ As the following figures show, there is little variation between different areas with regard to the number of Indians born in Malaya and those born elsewhere.

	<u>Indians born in Malaya</u>		<u>Indians born elsewhere</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of total Indian population</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of total Indian population</u>
Straits Settlements	30,236	23	101,974	77
F. M.S.	84,036	22	295,903	78
	131,505	21	491,919	79

It should be noted that between 1921 and 1931 the percentage of Indians born in Malaya greatly increased. For British Malaya as a whole in

¹ op. cit., p. 71

1921 only 12.4 percent of the total population was born in Malaya, while 87.6 percent were born elsewhere. Presumably this tendency has continued and the 1931 figures therefore cannot be considered typical of conditions today. Lennox A. Mills, writing in 1942, remarked that Indian labor in Malaya is now in a transitional stage. "Formerly the labourer migrated to Malaya for two or three years and then returned to India with his earnings. Today the majority still return to their villages, but increasingly they come back to Malaya, often accompanied by relatives and friends, and even more important, wives... During the past decade the number who have been in Malaya and regard it and not India as their home has been growing... On a few of the older plantations the majority of the labourers have been born on the estate." ¹

B. Principal Occupations

In British Malaya (exclusive of Brunei) 189,998 Indians including men and women, were engaged in the cultivation of rubber. ² Of these 101 were estate owners, managers, and assistants. The 42,650 Indians employed in commerce included proprietors and managers of businesses, salesmen, shop assistants, peddlers, moneylenders, etc. Most of the 25,595 Indians occupied in transport and communication

¹ British Rule in Eastern Asia, p. 236

² This is based on the 1931 census, from which all the following figures are taken. According to the International Labour Review, July 1940, Vol. XLII, No. 1, p. 66, the number of Indian Laborers on estates was 214,610 in 1938. This probably includes coconut plantations as well as rubber estates, but undoubtedly the figure for 1940 was considerably higher than that for 1931.

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were railway laborers, drivers of vehicles, bullock cart owners and drivers; in the Straits Settlements a large number worked as dock laborers, boatmen and lightermen. Only in the Federated Malay States was there a large number of Indians in the mining industry. The total number was 6,189 and over half of these were in Perak. Laborers, general and indeterminate, numbered 61,237; 3,712 were in the police force, most of these in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States. In the unfederated states the total number of Indians in the police force was 266. With the exception of four commissioned officers and inspectors among the Indian police, all were in the ranks; these four were in Singapore municipality. Of the 920 Indians in the army, 736 were in the Federated Malay States, with 94 in the Straits Settlements and 70 in Johore. One in Singapore and six in the Federated Malay States were commissioned officers.

Broadly speaking sectional groups are associated with occupational divisions. Thus the Tamils, Telugus, and Malayalis are for the most part engaged in the cultivation of rubber. The Punjabis are found mainly in and near the large towns. A considerable proportion "are accounted for by the Police Forces, they are also extensively employed as watchmen...and frequently combine money-lending with this and other pursuits. In suburban and rural areas, they are characteristically associated with stock farming and bullock cart driving." ¹ Natives of Bombay are usually shopkeepers, and the Bengalis, who are few in

¹ Census of 1931, p. 86

number, are also engaged in occupations other than agriculture.

In summary, the Indian population of Malaya consisted chiefly of Tamils from South India who were occupied on plantations or engaged in menial labor of various types. The length of their stay in Malaya was short and their ties were with the homeland, where for the most part their families remained and to which they returned. There were no trade unions, and opportunities of developing a spirit of independence and cooperation were slight. Situated on isolated plantations, these Indians were almost completely under the control of the employers and cut off from the outside world.¹ A small number of Indians were located in the towns and engaged in business or professional activities. For the most part these were northerners who apparently had little contact with their fellow Indians from the South in a lower economic class. Emerson contrasts the Indian population with the Chinese in Malaya, who, rich or poor, have a feeling of kinship with each other. "Among the Indians this is far from being the case: the Tamils and other south Indians are a despised proletariat who have virtually no bond joining them to their alleged brethren from other parts of India who have done better for themselves in Malaya." ²

C. Indian Associations

In almost every town in Malaya there were Indian associations,

1 cf. note on Indians Abroad by Pandit H. N. Kunzru. Servant of India 1939, p. 61-62

2 Rupert Emerson, Malaysia, New York, 1937, p. 34

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and delegates chosen from these met once a year to hold the All-Malayan National Congress. This annual conference was founded in 1927 by Mr. S. Veerasamy, one of the most prominent Indians in the country who in 1931 represented the Indian community in the Federal Council. In 1936 a Central Indian Association was founded in Kuala Lumpur. Its objects were "(a) to promote and safeguard the political, social and economic interests of the Indians in Malaya; (b) to represent, express and give effect to Indian public opinion; (c) to consider all questions affecting the interests of the whole or any section of the community; (d) to take steps to promote or oppose legislative or other measures affecting the interests of the whole or any section of the community; and (e) to do all such things as may be conducive to the furtherance of the above mentioned objects or any of them." ¹ How far any of these associations were representative of the Indian masses is not known. Probably the membership was drawn almost entirely from the urban population.

However, these organizations proved to be useful nuclei for the present Indian Independence Leagues, and several of the Indians who were prominent in the old associations are today actively aiding the Japanese. ² It should not be assumed from this fact that the Indians in Malaya were, previous to the Japanese invasion, primarily

¹ Indian Review, November 1936, p. 696

² See Appendix

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or actively interested in the Indian struggle for independence. With regard to the masses of the Indian population it is doubtful if they took any interest in political affairs, either of India or Malaya. It has been said that the Hindu merchants of Singapore were mostly loyal to the Indian National Congress;¹ and when Jawaharlal Nehru visited Malaya in 1937, he was very enthusiastically received. There appears, however, to have been very little contact with the Congress group in India. As is indicated by the program cited above, the Indians in Malaya were more concerned with advancing their political and economic position in the country of their adoption than in working for the independence of India.

D. Indians under British Administration in Malaya

Indians believe that they have serious grievances in regard to their treatment by the British in Malaya. Numerically they have a strong claim to consideration, and the prosperity of the country undoubtedly owes much to their labor. Indians criticized the Government of Malaya for failure to safeguard the economic interests of the Indian laborer. Wages have been low and the means of livelihood uncertain for the past decade. During 1931-32 when the rubber industry suffered from the general depression, large numbers of Indians were thrown out of work; wages were reduced by 20 percent from the 1928 figure of 50¢ per day. According to proposals made by the Government of India,

¹ cf. Ian Morrison, Malayan Postscript. London, 1942, p. 31

73,000 Indians were repatriated free of cost and all recruitment of labor in India was brought to an end. As conditions improved, assisted immigration was resumed in 1934 at the request of the Malayan Government. Wages remained low until 1936, when, acting on the advice of a deputation from India, the Malayan Government restored half of the cut imposed in 1930. Finally in 1937 wages were raised to the former level of 50¢ per day for men and 40¢ for women. When the rubber industry again deteriorated in 1938 the wages of Indian workers were once more reduced, but with the advent of war and the increase in the price of rubber, wages were fixed at 50¢ per day; the cost of living, however, had greatly increased and the laborer did not profit from the war in any material way.

Indians declare that facilities for education of their children have been unsatisfactory. In Penang, Malacca, and Singapore, there was not a single Government Tamil school, in spite of large numbers of Tamil government employees in these places.¹

In regard to public services and representation in public bodies, Indians believe that their status was not commensurate with their importance. Indians were not permitted to enter the Malayan Civil Service, and they had no municipal or political franchise. There was one non-official Indian member nominated to the Federal Council and another on

1 cf. Rammanohar Lohia, Indians in Foreign Lands. Allahabad, 1938, p. 25

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the Straits Settlements Legislative Council.¹

IV. INDIANS IN INDOCHINA

It is impossible to state the exact number of Indians living in Indochina; 6,000 is probably a fair estimate. About half of these are from French colonies in India, and for the most part they have established themselves in Cochinchina, though there are about 350 in Cambodia. The natives of British India are nearly all Muslims from the northern provinces.² There is also a fairly large group of Chettyars from South India;³ and a few Parsis from Bombay engage in import trade.⁴

Indians from French India are for the most part minor government employees, postmen, policemen, assistant registrars, customs or excise clerks. The Muslims from British India are shopkeepers and pawnbrokers, cashiers and watchmen. The Chettyars, or moneylenders, most of whom are located in Cochinchina, where, in 1937, there were 120 Chetti firms, form the wealthiest group among the Indians. They own a considerable amount of land and engage extensively in trade. In Cochinchina alone, Chettyars own one-fourth of the total rice-growing area. In 1933, their business methods and the hold they had acquired over the agriculture

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- 1 cf. Dharam Yash Dev, Our Countrymen Abroad. Allahabad, 1940, p. 53-54
 - 2 Pierre Tap, French Indochina, Asiatic Review, April 1937, p. 368
 - 3 Indian Review, November 1940, p. 688. A note refers to an article in Illustrated Weekly by Nilkant Perumal
 - 4 Radhakamal Mukerjee, Le Migrazioni Asiatiche. Rome, 1936, p. 114

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of the country aroused wide-spread antagonism. As a result of the depression, the Chetti system of short-term loans resulted in great hardship particularly for the agriculturists. Five Chetti bankers were expelled from Indochina on "the alleged ground that they created political disturbances in the country."¹ Later on the order of expulsion was canceled but the French authorities by establishing long term credit offices have considerably undermined the position of the Chettyars, and in the first eight months of 1933 about 65 percent of the Chetti capital was removed to Burma, Malaya, and India. It seems probable that the Chettyars who remain form a dissatisfied group, hostile to continued French domination in Indochina.

V. INDIANS IN N.E.I.

In the Netherlands East Indies there were, according to the 1920 Census, 27,684 Indians. Of these 12,654 were born in the area; 15,030 were born abroad, presumably for the most part in India, though it is possible that emigrants from Malaya were a numerous group.² The men outnumber the women by about two to one.³ The Indians located in Java and Sumatra number 25,638, the greater proportion of these being in Java. In Bali and Western Lombok there is "a handful of Indians,"

1 Lanka Sundaram, The Chettiars of Indochina, Modern Review, September 1933, p. 302

2 International Labor Office. Studies and Reports Series O, No. 6, World Statistics of Aliens

3 S.A. Reitsma, Van Stockum's Travellers' Handbook for the Dutch East Indies. The Hague, 1930

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and a few more in Dutch Borneo.¹

Speaking of the Indians generally, the Handbook for the Dutch East Indies says, "The majority are Mohammedans and come from the coastal districts of Coromandel and Malabar. Many are found in the plantation areas of Deli as coolies, car drivers, cattlemen, etc., owing to their fine physique, these so-called Klings ... are engaged as night-watchmen on the plantations. In Java they are mostly smaller shop-keepers. They are conspicuous owing to their height, heavy growth of beard and large turbans."² This reference to height and growth of beard suggests that there is a Sikh element in the Indian population.

VI. INDIANS IN CHINA

A. Population Statistics

The principal Indian colonies in China are in Shanghai and Hongkong. Indians in Hongkong numbered 4,745.³ These included the troops which formed part of the garrison, the Sikh contingent of the police, and a few merchants and clerks.⁴ According to the 1921 census of Hongkong, about 85 percent of the adult male Indians were employed as police or watchmen, or in various government departments. Most of the Indians were Punjabis or natives of the North West Frontier Province.

1 Radhakamal Mukerjee, Indian and Chinese Labour in the Agriculture of South East Asia. Modern Review, December 1933, p. 670

2 op. cit., p. 61

3 International Labor Office. Studies and Reports, Series O, No. 6, World Statistics of Aliens, p. 124

4 Lennox A. Mills, British Rule in Eastern Asia. London, 1942, p. 388

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In 1930 there were 1,842 Indians living in Shanghai.¹ "Practically all of these Indians were brought to Shanghai originally as policemen... but after completing their term of enlistment, many remained here to engage in business or professional activities."² For the most part the Indians of Shanghai are Sikhs.

B. Indians in China and Indian Nationalism

Indians in China have taken an active interest in Indian political affairs for many years. Before the last war, in both Hongkong and Shanghai there were Ghadr (revolution) societies, affiliated with similar organizations on the west coast of the United States and elsewhere,³ which conspired for the overthrow of the British government in India. A number of Indians in Hongkong and Shanghai were involved in the Komogatu Maru affair in 1914. In order to test Canadian immigration laws which made it practically impossible for Indian immigrants in Canada to be joined by their wives and children, and also to "embarrass the British government by compelling it either to interfere with Canada's immigration policy or to suffer a further loss of popularity in India."⁴ A Japanese vessel, the Komogatu Maru, was chartered by a Sikh named Gurudutt Singh, a man prominent in the Far East. The ship sailed from Hongkong to Canada with 351 Sikhs and 21 Punjabi Muslims recruited at

1 All About Shanghai, 1934-35 edition, Shanghai 1934, gives the 1930 Census figure.

2 China Weekly Review, 6 July 1929

3 cf. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, India as I Knew It. London, 1925, p. 193

4 W. R. Smith, Nationalism and Reform in India. New Haven, 1938, p. 79

Hongkong, Shanghai, Moji and Yokohama. The great majority of the passengers were not permitted to land in Canada. During the return trip war broke out and for various reasons the passengers were not allowed to land at the ports of embarkation but were taken to Budge Budge in Bengal. These men formed the nucleus of the agitation in the Punjab which lasted during the war and for several years after. Other conspirators arrived shortly after the Komogatu Maru, and these also were for the most part Sikhs from America, Japan, Manila and Shanghai who had been in touch with German agents en route to India.¹ The disturbances in the Punjab which these men helped to further were for a time directed by Rash Behari Bose.²

From 1920 to 1940 Indian political development in China was influenced by two separate organizations, the Indian National Congress and the Chinese Kuomintang Party. Reliance on methods of terrorism was modified by the Congress policy of passive resistance, and the growing strength of the Congress in India encouraged increased activity among the Indians in China. At the same time the development of nationalism in China proved an inspiration to the Indian group. To a certain extent the Communists also played a part, but their influence on the Indians in China does not appear to have been very great at any time, and was probably much less after the break occurred between Chiang Kai-shek and the Chinese Communists.

1 cf. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, India as I Knew It. London, 1925, p. 195

2 see p. 45

C. Indian Organizations

In 1927 some Chinese members of the Kuomintang, some Koreans, a few Filipinos, some Japanese "proletarians" and a number of Indians formed the Eastern Oppressed Peoples' Association.¹ The organization was formed originally when the radical section of the Kuomintang was in power, and its headquarters were in Hankow. Later on these were moved to Nanking, and the organization remained under the protection of the Kuomintang party. It has been said that Jawaharlal Nehru sponsored the establishment of the Eastern Oppressed Peoples' association.² It is possible that the idea was conceived at the Brussels Congress of Oppressed Nationalities at which Nehru was present, and in which the leftist members of the Kuomintang played an active part.

The Indian section of the Eastern Oppressed Peoples' Association in Nanking published for some years a bi-weekly called Ghadar Dhandora (Declaration of Revolution).

In line with the sympathy expressed by the All India Congress Committee for China in her struggle for freedom, and the Committee's condemnation in 1927 of the action of the Government of India in sending Indian troops to China, and the demand for their withdrawal³ the

1 China Weekly Review, 6 July 1929

2 K.M. Pannikar, The Future of South-East Asia, London, 1943, p. 79

3 B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, The History of the Congress. Allahabad, 1935, p. 530

Indians in China engaged in propaganda among the Indian troops stationed at Shanghai. These troops on their way to China, had been subjected to propaganda to the effect that Indian temples in China were being destroyed, women violated, etc. "But they were met, almost at the dock, by certain men of their own nationality, who were working for the cause of Indian freedom among the large groups of Indian police and watchmen already in Shanghai....The reaction of the troops when they discovered the untruth of the stories which had been circulated among them was great."¹ As a result, these troops had to be sent back to Hongkong. Later two more battalions, Punjabis who spoke a different dialect from that of the Indian nationalist workers in Shanghai arrived, but these too were infected with sympathy for the Chinese cause. Expenses of the Indian organization are alleged to have been paid by donations from Chinese friends and members of the Kuomintang. On the whole, the Indians in Shanghai were too poor to contribute large sums to the movement, though they gave what they could afford.²

It has been stated that there were two groups of Indian agitators in Shanghai at this time. One group believed in "the passive resistance policy of Mahatma Gandhi, their leader," while the second group consisted of Communists "working for the complete overthrow of British rule in India and its members are fanatical believers in the most radical measures."³

1 China Weekly Review, 6 August 1927
 2 cf. loc. cit.
 3 loc. cit.

Gujjan Singh, Daswanda Singh, and Gainda Singh were members of this Communist group. An Indian, M. N. Roy, was in China at this time as a delegate of the Communist International. It is not known, however, whether or not he played any active role in the Indian organizations; certainly during this period he was more concerned with developments in China than in India.

Harchan Singh, an Indian nationalist of Shanghai and a member of the Eastern Oppressed Peoples' Association, who had taken part in the propagandist activities referred to above, was murdered in 1929. Shortly before his death he had compiled a list of Indians in Shanghai who were alleged to be in the employ of the British Indian Secret Service.¹ Five Indians, also members of the Eastern Oppressed Peoples' Association were charged with his murder. These were Norang Singh, Sadku Singh, Mowa Singh, and Karm Singh.² They were acquitted of the charge of murder but shortly after rearrested on charges of sedition, and were given jail sentences to be followed by deportation.³ About this time five other Indians, also Sikhs, Ishar Singh, Indar Singh, Hakim Singh, Asa Singh, and Narain Singh were arrested on charges of sedition. They were accused of reading aloud in a Sikh temple in Chapei nationalist papers received from India. This temple had been closed in 1927 by the British authorities "on the grounds that the premises were being

1 op. cit., 4 May 1929
2 op. cit., 18 May 1929
3 op. cit., 6 July 1929

used for Bolshevik propaganda,"¹ but it was reopened in 1928. The seditionists in question were sentenced to prison with hard labor and later deported.²

In 1930, while civil disobedience was in progress in India there were a number of other arrests on charges of sedition among the Indians of China. The Indian Youth League of China issued several manifestos condemning British rule and calling upon all Indians to fight for a free Asia.³ In June 1930 the British police raided the League headquarters and made two arrests. In July of the same year Zapuran Singh distributed pamphlets printed in English and Chinese and published by the E.O.P.A. He was sentenced to two months hard labor and deportation.⁴

The Indian Youth League which had its headquarters in Chapei had "some kind of agreement with the Kuomintang and Bureau of Public Safety,"⁵ which enabled it to hold meetings and carry on political activity. The leaders were young working men who were literate and intelligent. They kept in touch with events in India and informed their countrymen in Shanghai by means of leaflets, magazines and pamphlets as well as public meetings. Chanan Singh and Kartar Singh, leading members of the League, and Surjan Singh were arrested in

1 op. cit., 21 April 1928
2 op. cit., 18 May 1929
3 op. cit., 17 and 31 May 1930
4 op. cit., 26 July 1930
5 op. cit., 10 January 1931

December 1930. All were tried for sedition, and two of the men were sentenced to imprisonment and deportation.¹

The instances cited above are probably only a few of many such cases of friction between the Indians and the British in China. They are, however, indicative of the degree to which the Indians were organized and of the enthusiasm felt there for the cause of nationalism of India.

VII. INDIANS IN JAPAN

A. Indian Population of Japan

According to the Japan Year Book for 1938-39² there were 874 Indians resident in Japan. Of these, 670 were males. For the most part the Indian group consisted of businessmen and students, located chiefly in the large cities, Tokyo, Kobe, Yokohama, with a few in Osaka.

B. Indian Revolutionaries of Japan

Japan has for many years been a refuge for Indian patriots of various hues. After the Russo-Japanese war, Indians generally regarded Japan with admiration and respect, and to a great extent looked to Japan as the leader of Asia. At the same time certain groups in Japan pursued the policy of actively encouraging revolutionary tendencies in Asiatic countries, especially those under European domination.

1 loc. cit.

2 Tokyo, 1939

The story of the Indian nationalist movement in Japan is a summary of the life histories of a small number of Indian revolutionaries who used their contacts with the Japanese to further their own, and what they believed to be their country's, ends. In the background of this Indian movement stands Mitsuru Toyama, the power behind almost all the Japanese patriotic societies. It is not to be doubted that Toyama conspired with these Indians, extended to them his patronage and protection, and used them for his own ends..

1. Maulvi Mohammed Barkatulla

Maulvi Mohammed Barkatulla was one of the earliest Indian revolutionaries with contacts in Japan. He was born in Bhopal in 1868 and educated in Bombay and London. He became a strong advocate of Pan-Islamism and extremely anti-British. In 1909 he was appointed to the chair of Hindustani in Tokyo Foreign Language School, and while in Japan he founded a paper called Islamic Fraternity, which he edited for some years. In 1911 he traveled for a time in Europe, visiting Cairo, Constantinople, St. Petersburg and Paris, where he came into contact with Krishnavarma, one of the best known Indian exiles of that period. On his return to Japan "the tone of his paper became so anti-British that it was suppressed by the Japanese Government in 1912. Early in 1914 he was deprived of his appointment in Tokio..."¹ From Japan, Barkatulla went to the United States.

1 Sir Michael O'Dwyer, India as I Knew It. London, 1925, p. 186

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There he joined forces with Har Dayal who had, a few years previously, founded the Ghadr (revolution) Party among Indian immigrants settled on the West Coast. In March 1914 Har Dayal was arrested by the United States Government and was about to be deported as an undesirable alien when he, together with Barkatulla, fled to Switzerland. The outbreak of the war found these two in Germany. In Berlin, Har Dayal and Barkatulla, with Chattopadhyaya and Pillai, well-known Indian seditionists, directed the activities of the Indian Revolutionary Society, and conspired with the aid of Germany to overthrow the British Government in India. In 1915 Barkatulla and Raja Mahendra Pratap¹ went to Kabul, where they formed the Provisional Indian Government. During the war this "government" "continued to encourage seditious agitation in India and hostile action by the frontier tribes.... After the war...it threw all its influence into promoting the rebellious outbreaks in India in April 1919."²

In 1927 Barkatulla represented the Hindustan Ghadr Party at the Brussels Congress against Imperialism, and later in the same year, he died in San Francisco.

2. Hariharnath Thulal Atal

Hariharnath Thulal Atal was another Indian who went to Japan in the early days of the twentieth century. Like Barkatulla he held the chair of Hindustani in Tokyo Foreign Language School. In

¹ see p. 42

² op. cit., p. 181

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1914 the Department of Education, according to report, wanted to re-new his contract, but the British authorities would not permit it.¹ Atal stayed on in Japan but the British began to "harass him in every way",² and finally in 1921 he committed suicide.

A memorial ceremony, arranged by Rash Behari Bose, was held in Tokyo, 14 June 1931, in honor of Barkatulla, Atal and Vikramratne. The last of these three lived in Tokyo for a few years where he worked with Bose "for the cause of Indian freedom."³ He died in Ceylon in 1928.

3. Raja Mahendra Pratap

One of the most interesting, and certainly the most picturesque of all the Indians in Japan is Raja Mahendra Pratap, a native of the United Provinces and formerly a wealthy landowner. Whether or not he played any part in the seditious movements of the period in India is uncertain. He is said to have founded Brindaban National University, of which he became President, and to have been the owner of a newspaper Narmalsewak. At the outbreak of the war in 1914, he went to Europe and came under the influence of Har Dayal. Through him, Pratap had an interview with the Kaiser, who, "impressed with a megalomania akin to his own",⁴ sent Pratap with Barkatulla to Kabul. He became a citizen of Afghanistan and continued to live there for some years.

1 cf. Voice of India, 15 July 1931

2 loc. cit.

3 loc. cit.

4 Sir Michael O'Dwyer, India as I Knew It, London, 1925, p. 177

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In 1925 Pratap, accompanied by Daswanda Singh, a student at California University, started out for Tibet and Nepal to see whether they "could do any service to India from these countries."¹ "Indian friends in California," probably members of the Ghadr organization, collected money to pay the expenses of the trip. A member of the Kuomintang party went along as interpreter and Mr. Charan Singh seems to have been a member of the group. To the various Chinese generals Pratap met along the way, he presented a copy of his book, The Religion of Love. Shortly after this, in 1926, he went to Japan, but for some reason he was not permitted to remain there. It has been suggested that the British authorities objected to his presence in Japan, and he returned to Afghanistan. He had, according to his own account, "no political ambition for the time being."²

About 1930 he was sent by the Government of Afghanistan on an economic "mission" to America and on his way home, he stopped in Japan. From there he went to Vladivostok where he was informed by the Soviet authorities that he could not proceed further. On his return to Japan, he learned that the Afghan government did not want him in the country for the time being; Pratap declared himself at a loss to explain this.³ He seems to have gone to Peiping shortly after this, where he published a monthly called World Federation, and busied

1 Modern Review, Vol. 45, 1929, p. 589. Article by Raja Mahendra Pratap, In China.

2 loc. cit.

3 cf. Voice of India, 15 July 1931

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himself collecting \$1,000 for a building to serve as a permanent office for World Federation. Early in 1933 he returned to Japan. The Voice of India, organ of the Indian Nationalist group in Japan, published a statement by Pratap who signed himself The Servant of Mankind, and announced that he had temporarily closed his Peiping office. He stated that if Japan would realize that the British Empire was working for Japan's destruction, Japan could come to dominate Asia.¹ When the Pan-Asiatic Congress was held in Dairen in 1934, Pratap attended it. He proceeded to Canton where he tried to organize an Oppressed Oriental Races Emancipation Society,² but he was arrested by the Canton government authorities and deported to Shanghai. He was again arrested in Shanghai, but "friends" secured his release.³ The China Weekly Review reported that "It is understood that the Afghanistan leader is in Shanghai on some mission on behalf of the Japanese."⁴ According to the Japan Weekly Chronicle, Pratap spent his time addressing the Sikh police.⁵ On his return to Japan Pratap set out to visit Siam. In 1935 he again visited the United States. It was said that his reception was rather cold and that he found the "atmosphere not suitable for his message."⁶

1 op. cit., 15 March 1933

2 China Weekly Review, 7 April 1934

3 Voice of India, August 1934

4 7 April 1934

5 5 April 1934

6 Voice of India, October 1935

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Pratap has never been one of the most influential Indians in Japan. As far as is known he has never held office in any of the numerous Indian organizations, and he seems never to have worked in close collaboration with Rash Behari Bose. Ideas of World Federation and Pan-Asianism have been obviously more appealing to him than the narrow cause of Indian freedom. He is not at present an important figure, and is said to be regarded as a crank by his fellow Indians, although a few of the Indian students in Japan have become his disciples. A recent report suggests that Pratap has not been able to reconcile Japanese imperialism with his ideas of world federation. It has been stated that he refused, "though pressed hard to do so," to attend the Japanese-sponsored Bangkok Conference in June 1942.¹

4. Rash Behari Bose

The most prominent Indian in Japan today is Rash Behari Bose. He was born in Bengal in 1886 and educated in Calcutta. For a time he was employed as a clerk in the Forest Research Institute, but while still a young man he became involved in the Indian revolutionary movement, in which Bengalis played so large a part. In 1910-11 he came under the influence of Har Dayal, who had recently returned from Europe and after Har Dayal went to America in 1911, Bose became one of the leaders of the movement. He was probably one of those responsible for the attack on the Viceroy of India in 1912. From 1912-15 he directed terrorist activities in the Punjab, but when a number of the ringleaders were arrested, Bose fled to Japan. The Japanese

¹ Amrita Bazar Patrika, 29 May

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Government ordered him to be deported, but he was protected by Mitsuru Toyama, and to avoid further trouble he took out Japanese citizenship papers. He married the daughter of a Japanese who kept a restaurant and eventually succeeded to the business.

The Japanese Who's Who for 1937 lists him as a journalist, lecturer, author and correspondent of Indian newspapers. This account is probably somewhat flattering. His reputation as a journalist rests chiefly upon the fact that from time to time he has written articles for several newspapers, among them the Calcutta Forward. He claims authorship of several books in Japanese on the Indian nationalist movement, but it is doubtful whether he has written them himself.

Bose is said to be politically honest and scrupulous, and sincere in his efforts to win freedom for India. According to reports he is equally convinced that this can be obtained with Japanese aid. Asked in 1933 why he did not return to India, he replied that he would come at the head of armed forces which would enter India by way of Assam. He is said to have Communist leanings and to have had contacts with the Soviet Embassy in Tokyo.

5. Anand Mohan Sahay

Anand Mohan Sahay is one of the few Indians in Japan who were ever closely connected with the Indian National Congress. He was born in 1898, the son of a landlord in Bhagalpore in the province of Bihar, and was educated at Patna University, where he studied medicine. When the Congress urged students to boycott government institutions, he gave

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up his work at the University and joined the independence movement. He worked actively with the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee. In 1923 he set out for America via Japan, to study medicine, but decided to settle in Japan to "work for the promotion of Indo-Japanese friendship and dissemination of correct information regarding India in Japan."¹

Since that time he has remained in Japan. According to his biography in the Japanese Who's Who for 1937 he is journalist, writer, educator, teacher and lecturer on India, Japan, Asia, and international problems. He was also for some time professor at Kobe Foreign Language School. Sahay is said to be completely unscrupulous, dishonest and insincere in political matters. One informant (name withheld) believes he could be bought by anyone prepared to pay the price of securing his support. The same source accuses him of extorting funds from Indian merchants to support himself and his various enterprises. Sahay and Bose are extremely jealous of one another and continually at loggerheads. Sahay is probably the cleverer of the two men.

C. Indian Organizations in Japan.

One of the earliest Indian organizations in Japan was the Indo-Japanese Association, founded in Tokyo about 1905 by the Rev. Dharmapala and Mr. Sakurai. Viscount Nagaoka was the first president and was succeeded by Marquis Okuma.² Valentine Chirol, writing in 1910,

1 Who's Who in Japan, 1937

2 Young East, Vol. 1, No. 4, September 1925, p. 134

- 48 -

stated that this society had "no connection with politics and the Indians claim that it is run for the benefit of the Japanese rather than for theirs. Those who have joined it in the hope of using it as a base for anti-British operations have certainly got very little for their pains. They occasionally write papers for the very few socialist papers of Japan, but their effective contribution to the cause is of trifling account."¹ By 1937 this organization had no Indian members, and during the previous decade its main activity was the development of economic relations between India and Japan.²

The Indian National Congress Committee of Japan was organized in 1928, with its headquarters in Kobe. A.M. Sahay was one of the leaders of the Committee and retained control over it.³ D.P. Mahabubani of Kobe was a delegate at the annual session of the Indian National Congress in 1928. The Committee has for some years published the Voice of India, with A. M. Sahay as editor. Originally the paper was published in English as a monthly, but was later printed in Japanese and English and usually appeared every fortnight. Congress activities in India were well covered, and considerable space was given to the activities of the committee in Japan. In 1931 the committee opened the India Lodge to accommodate India students studying in Japan.

It is probably incorrect to assume that the committee had any close connection with the Indian National Congress. Sahay claimed

1 Indian Unrest, London, 1910, p. 148

2 Voice of India, August 1937, p. 15

3 Voice of India, December 1935

that it was recognized by the parent organization in 1929,¹ but according to report, Kripalani, the General Secretary of the Indian Congress wrote to Sahay denying that this was the case, and pointing out the fact that it was contrary to Congress policy to establish or recognize branches outside of India.

Other Indian organizations include the Indian National Association founded about 1930 with branches in Yokohama, Kobe and probably elsewhere; and the Japan-Indian Society of Kansai, established about the same time. In 1931 Rash Behari Bose organized the Indian Independence League, which had as its object "the attainment of Independence for India by all possible means."² Bose became the first president, and P. S. Deshpande secretary of the League. The League functioned as a rival organization to Sahay's Japanese Congress Committee. The Indo-Japanese Young Peoples' Association was formed about 1934-35 "to encourage the study of Indian and Japanese problems."³ The Gandhi Society of Tokyo, a small and poorly organized group, seems to have been chiefly interested in economic relations between India and Japan. It is said to have been ideologically opposed to Gandhi and scornful of the doctrine of non-violence.

There were in addition to these, various Indian social and business organizations, such as the Indian Social Society, and the Indian Merchants Association.

1 Voice of India, December 1935

2 Voice of India, 15 September 1931

3 op. cit., July-August 1935

VIII. INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND INDIANS OVERSEAS

The general attitude of the Indian National Congress to Indians abroad is best summed up in a resolution passed by the Congress at its annual session in 1936. "The Congress sends greetings to our fellow-countrymen overseas and its assurances of sympathy and help in their distressful condition and in the continuing deterioration in their status in the territories in which they have settled. The Congress is ready and willing to take all action within its power to ameliorate their condition, but desires to point out that a radical amelioration in their status must ultimately depend on the attainment by India of Independence and the power effectively to protect her nationals abroad."¹ Except for numerous resolutions, dating from the early days of the Congress, which did little more than express sympathy with the plight of Indians overseas, interest on the part of Congress in their problems has been slight. This is especially true of Indians in Southeast Asia. Gandhi's early connections with South Africa, where Indians are settled in large numbers, has tended to focus attention on that area, while Indians in Southeast Asia, except in times of crisis such as the riots in Burma or the severe economic depression in Malaya, have been more or less ignored.

The Indian National Congress has never to any extent developed contacts with Indians abroad for political purposes. The Congress

¹ Dharam Yash Dev, Our Countrymen Abroad, Allahabad, 1940, p. 90

Working Committee in 1936 passed a resolution advocating the establishment of a foreign department "with a view to creating and maintaining contacts with Indians overseas and with international labor and other organizations abroad with whom cooperation is possible and is likely to help in the cause of Indian freedom."¹ This department, however, was not very active and beyond issuing a circular to Indians overseas inviting them to keep in touch with the Congress, and printing a short pamphlet on Indians abroad, did very little to fulfill its expressed function. The unofficial visit of Jawaharlal Nehru to Burma and Malaya in 1937 probably served to arouse the interest of Indians in these countries in the National Congress, but there seems to have been no attempt to follow this up with propaganda or definite programs. Sometime before 1940 the Congress opened a department of Indians overseas, and published a pamphlet entitled "Our Countrymen Abroad." This was chiefly to inform the Indian people regarding conditions of Indians overseas, and to awaken interest in their problems. Perhaps, had the war not intervened, more active contacts with Indians overseas would have been instituted.

¹ Modern Review, April 1936, p. 465

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APPENDICES

I. INDIANS IN BURMA

Delegates from Rangoon to the Conference of Representatives of the IIL at Bangkok June 1942.¹

Bannerjea, N. K.
Buckle Balam, J. K.
Chakravarti, N.
Chanda
Desai, T. O.
Ginwalla, A.
Khan, Sheriff
Khan, Yakoob
Lathia, L. B.
Mehta, C. P.
Pillai, E. Pounuswami
Raudry
Row, N.
Sattar, A.
Shaftee, Mohamed
Singh, Chatar
Singh, Lachman
Taffar, Mohamed

Notes on Indians in Burma

Gani, A. M. A. Karim: Editor of Tamil weeklies, Jauhar, Alhilal and Sooryan. Secretary, Young Chulia Muslim League. In 1931 elected President All Burma south Indian Association. Elected to legislative council in 1932; House of Representatives in 1936. Vice-President All Burma Muslim League in 1937. In 1940 became editor and publisher of Burma newspaper Do-Daung Lan. After Japanese occupation became Chairman of Burma District Committee of IIL, and was delegate to conference at Bangkok.²

¹ Bangkok Times, 12 June 1942

² Government of Burma, Burma Handbook Simla 1943, p. 116

- Lathia, L. B.: Editor of Burma Oriya Patrika (Oriya weekly) and The Daily Gujarati, both pro-Congress newspapers.
- Mahmood, Sultan (Sultan Mohamad, Sultan Wakil): Born in Akyab, educated in Calcutta. Lower grade pleader in Akyab. Elected to House of Representatives for Akyab (Indian) constituency. Parliamentary Secretary in Ba Maw, U Pu and U Saw Ministries. After Japanese invasion joined IIL and went to Conference at Bangkok. Organized branch of league at Akyab.¹
- Pillay, E. Pounuswami: Labor leader. At one time member of Legislative Council; Government of Burma awarded him the T.P.S., an order usually given only to Burmans, for his work in the cause of humanity.²

1 op. cit., p. 118

2 Bangkok Times, 26 June 1942

II. INDIANS IN THAILAND

*Deceased
Source: Bangkok Times

Name Remarks

Amaranath, Mulamal	Merchant	12-23-41
Amaranath, Sohansingh	"	"
Aouja, Babu Sudarshan	Active in IIL. Carried on subversive work among Indian soldiers in Malaya.	1-28-42
Champi, Amardas	Member of IIL	3-4-42
Choke, Ram Surat	Worked among Indian soldiers in Malaya.	2-12-42
Indersingh, Burasingh	Merchant	12-23-41
Malberi, H..A.	"	"
Maskati, A. T. E.	"	"
Mirza, Hakim	Member of IIL	5-15-42
Nana, A. E.	Merchant	12-23-41

Table Cont'd.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Remarks</u>	<u>Source: Bangkok Times</u>
Nandan, Raghu	Merchant	12-23-41
Nandsingh, Giansingh	"	"
Narula, Arkbaksingh	"	"
Natta, Labh Singh	Member of IIL. Worked among Indian soldiers in Malaya.	2-12-42
*Puri, Swami Satyananda	(see p. 18)	
Ramchand, M. D.	Merchant	12-23-41
Salebbhai, A. A. R.	"	"
Sastri, Pandit Raghunath	Member of IIL	5-15-42
Sevekram	" " "	"
Singh, Amar	(See p. 16)	
" S. Bhagwan	Secretary of IIL. Writes frequently for <u>Bangkok Times</u> . States that he spent some years in Malaya.	1-28-42

Table Cont'd.

*Deceased

<u>Name</u>	<u>Remarks</u>	<u>Source: Bangkok Times</u>
*Singh, Giani Pritam	(See p. 16)	
" S. Kishan	Member of IIL	1-28-42
" Kundan	" " "	5-15-42
" Tarkchan	Worked among soldiers in Malaya	2-12-42
Sukul, B. Amurudh	Member of IIL	1-28-42
" Dunia	" " " Worked among soldiers in Malaya.	2-12-42
Thaiwalla, D. H. A.	Merchant (?)	3-4-42
Wasee, A. K. S.	"	12-23-41
Yaswansingh, Kiansingh	"	"

III. SOME PROMINENT INDIANS IN MALAYA

Aiyer, K. A. Neelakandha: Secretary in 1938 of the Central Indian Association of Malaya.

Aiyer, R. V.: Editor of The Indian, an English weekly published at Kuala Lumpur.¹

Cader, H. H. Abdul: "...born in Surat, Bombay Presidency in 1890 and is the eldest son of a ... well-known merchant of Penang. After being educated in Surat and afterwards at Raffles School, Singapore and the Free School, Penang ... proceeded to England in ... 1905 and joined the Country High School, Ilford. He matriculated there in 1908 and later he joined Lincoln's Inn and Christ's college, Cambridge University and took up Law Tripos. He was called to the Bar in 1912 and had the honor of being presented to His Majesty King George V on March 11th 1912.

"He returned to Penang in April 1912 and was admitted to the Straits Settlements Bar in ... the same year and to the F.M.S. Bar in 1915. Since then he is practising in Penang. He is the President of the United Indian Association, Penang and he is a representative of the Indian community on the Municipal commission, Penang since ... 1925 He has travelled extensively on the continent and in India...

"Appointed member of the Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements 23rd July, 1928." ²

In 1929 he was President of the third all Malayan Indian conference which met at Singapore. ³

Chandran, L. R.: Member of Central Indian Association. ⁴

1 Indian Review, March 1936, p. 208

2 Modern Review, September 1928, p. 345

3 Op. cit., February 1932, p. 202

4 Indian Review, March 1939, p. 184

- Jummubhoy, R.: Leading Indian businessman of Singapore.¹
- Menon, N. K.: President of fourth All Malayan Indian Conference held in 1931 at Teluk Anson. Member of Indian Immigration Committee.²
- Narayan, K. A.: General Secretary of All Malayan Indian Conference. Vice-president of Selangor Indian Association.³
- Pillai, V. N.: Justice of the Peace in Penang. Member of Indian Immigration Committee. Founder of various Indian organizations in Penang. Chairman of Indian Unemployment Committee in 1932.⁴
- Raghavan, N.: President of Indian Association, Penang in 1938.⁵ Born in Cochin. Educated at a Christian college in Madras. Studied Law in England and went to Penang as a lawyer in 1928. One of the Organizers of the Central Indian Association of Malaya. "In politics Mr. Raghavan is a staunch follower of Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress and he has always maintained contact with Indian nationalist Leaders."⁶
- Sharma, S. M.: Member of the Central Indian Association.⁷
- Soosay, A. M.: President of the Central Indian Association in 1938.⁸
- Veerasamy, S.: Well-known Indian lawyer in Malaya, and one of the founders of the All-Malayan National Congress. Represented Indian community on the Federal Council in 1931.⁹ President of Selangor Indian Association, Kuala Lumpur.¹⁰

1 Modern Review, February 1932, p. 202
2 Modern Review, February 1932, p. 202
3 Loc. cit.
4 Loc. cit., p. 676
5 Indian Review, January 1938, p. 47
6 Bangkok Times, 18 June 1942
7 Indian Review, March 1939, p. 184
8 Loc. cit., October 1938, p. 666
9 Indian Review, February 1931, p. 110
10 op. cit., November 1936, p. 696

Members of the IIL of Malaya ¹

The following were delegates to the conference of representatives of IIL at Bangkok, June 1942:

Ahmed, Major Aziz	Menon, K. P. K.
Cader, Janab H. H. Abdul	Nawaz, Havildar Rab
Chan, Major Prakash	Pattanayek, Capt.
Chan, Havildar Tara	Pillai, Sri F. K. (?)
Chatterjee, Lt. Col.	Raghavan, N.
Chopra, S. N.	Habib-ur-Rahaman, Capt.
Dalal, P. M.	Raju, Major D. S.
Das, B. K.	Ram, Lt. Babu
Ditta, Capt. Allah	Ramchandran, M. K.
Gillani, Lt. Col. G. Q.	Seshan, Sri K.
Jahangir, Cap. D. D.	Shamugam, Sri S.
Khan, Janab Amir Mohd.	Singh, Lieut. Amar
Kahn, Capt. Mumtaz	" Hardat
Kiani, Capt. J. J.	" Dr. Jagat
Kundanlal	" Capt. Mohan
Lakshmeyeb, M. K.	" Capt. Dhian
Logananda, Lt. Col. A. D.	" Lieut. Kishan
Mallal, Bashir	" Lieut. Paran
Mallick, Capt. S. A.	" Sardar Badh
Mazumdar, D. K.	" 2nd Lieut. Rattan
	Thivy, J. A.

IIL IN MALAYA ²

<u>State</u>	<u>Branch</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>Total Membership</u>
Kedah	Alor Star	Bhagwan Singh	1000
	Pattani	V. M. Kader	200
	Kulim	Hamir Singh	500
Perak	Taiping	Jal Manek Shah	1000
	Kuala Kangsar	Lalsingh	1000
	Ipoh	B. K. Das	5000

¹ Bangkok Times, 13 June 1942

² Bangkok Times, 27 March 1942

IIL in Malaya - Cont'd.

<u>State</u>	<u>Branch</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>Total Membership</u>
Selangor	Kuala Lumpur	Dr. Lakhshimya	40,000
	Kajang	Zakariah	2,000
	Klang	Lachmanan	?
Negri Sembilan	Seramban	Dr. Mazumdar	800
Malacca		Mr. Shanmugar Pillai	no report
Penang		Mr. Raghwan	7,000
Singapore		Mr. Goho expected	50,000



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W. D. A. Lebacqz [F]

R & A 1595S

By E. C. B. R. 8 DECEMBER 1944

Date Dec. 3, 1946

Japanese Organization of Indian Minorities in East Asia

The Japanese conquerors of East Asia have turned the twin instruments of power and propaganda to the organization of Indian Independence Leagues among the Indian minorities of each country. This policy, which has served to consolidate the Japanese political position in occupied areas, is part of a program designed to exploit what they consider the greatest vulnerability of the Western powers in the Far East — anti-British feeling.

Japanese anti-British propaganda, with its slogan of "Asia for the Asiatics," and the policy of singling out the Indian communities for more favorable treatment, undoubtedly carried considerable appeal to Indians in East Asia. The Leagues set up were strengthened by deliberate avoidance of all communal (religious group) issues that might divide their ranks. Since the Russo-Japanese war of 1904, furthermore, Japan has enjoyed increasing prestige as the one Asiatic nation able to establish herself as an independent equal of the Western powers. In the early years of World War II, Japan appeared to have established herself even more firmly in East Asia, and Britain's defeat in India may have seemed a matter of months. Expediency demanded that the Indians cooperate with the Japanese.

Only a few of the Indian Independence Leagues were based on pre-war nationalist organizations in East Asia. Many more were established by the Japanese special intelligence service (*Hikari Kikan*), which is entrusted with organizing fifth-column activities by minority groups in occupied areas, and which moved into each country in the wake of the Army. Even by June 1942, a conference of League representatives in Bangkok claimed a large membership for each country.

In several areas of East Asia the Independence Leagues have large Indian populations upon which to draw for membership. Indians are most numerous in Burma and Malaya, where they form a considerable portion of the laboring class. In Thailand and Indochina, on the other hand, they are a small, compact merchant community. The few Indians in China are for the most part former members of the British police force or army who remained in Hongkong or Shanghai when their term of service was completed. Both China and Thailand had a number of Indian political exiles and nationalists. In Japan a small group of Indian merchants, students, and exiled Indian patriots settled in the principal cities. Most of the Indians in East Asia are immigrants who return after a period to the country of their birth, and therefore might be expected to be concerned with the fate of their homeland.

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~~SECRET~~

Burma

Before the Japanese invasion, the main concern of Burman Indian organizations was the protection of the social and economic status of Indians in Burma itself. But since the arrival of Subhas Chandra Bose and the development in 1944 of his Japanese-sponsored campaign for Indian independence, Burma has become the headquarters of his movement.

Until 1937, when it became a separate British Crown Colony, Burma was politically part of India. At the time of the Japanese invasion, it had over half a million Indians, the largest group of Indians in East Asia outside of India itself. By far the greater part of the Indians belong to the laboring class, but a small group was engaged in administrative and professional work. A large number of Indian merchants had heavy financial stakes in the country, which they had accumulated through their money-lending and rice-selling activities. Although many of these escaped back to India, they left representatives to protect their interests and provided Bose's movement with a source of funds.

The Burmese are openly hostile toward the Indians, and consider them a menace to Burma's national and economic life, and even to the Buddhist religion. The Indians themselves have long been conscious of being a racial minority and are jealous of their status as a separate political group. As early as 1922, Indians had formed a separate electorate which, under British auspices, was incorporated into the present constitution in the face of Burman opposition. Most of the educated Indians in Burma sympathized with the aims of the Indian National Congress. The imported laborers who formed the bulk of the Indian population were largely recruited from the northeastern provinces and were politically inactive before the war. However, Indian National Congress propaganda may have influenced them to a certain extent while they were still in India.

In 1942 the Japanese organized an Indian Independence League in Burma. The Indians showed little enthusiasm, however, until Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in 1943 to assume leadership of the League and to organize the Indian National Army. Bose was popular partly because many of the Indians had originally come from Bengal, the province where Bose had his largest following.

At the time of the farthest Japanese military advance into India in the spring of 1944 Bose actually succeeded in establishing a Japanese-supported "Indian Provisional Government" on Indian soil. Although Bose's forces were driven back with the Japanese, Burma continues to be the front line of Indian Independence League activity in support of the Japanese military effort.

Malaya

For the most part, Indians in Malaya, forming over twelve percent of the total population, are still more concerned with advancing their political and economic position in the country of their adoption than

in working for the independence of India. These Indians consist chiefly of Tamils from Southern India who work on isolated plantations or do menial labor of various types. Their stay in Malaya is short and they retain strong ties with the homeland. They have no trade unions and few opportunities to develop a spirit of independence and cooperation, and are almost completely under the control of their employers. Some Indians live in the towns and are engaged in business or professional activities. For the most part they are from northern India and have little contact with the lower-class Tamils from the South. This northern group and prisoners of war taken during the Japanese advance have formed the nucleus of Indian Independence League activity in Malaya.

In almost every urban community in Malaya Indian associations were established before the war. Their declared object was "to promote and safeguard the political, social, and economic interests of the Indians in Malaya," for neglect of which they criticized the British Government of Malaya. Indians believe that their status has not been commensurate with their importance. In addition to poor educational and employment conditions, they have not been permitted to enter the Malayan Civil Service, and have not been allowed to vote.

Before the Japanese invasion, the Indians were not actively interested in India's struggle for independence. The masses of the Indian population took virtually no interest in the political affairs of either India or Malaya, and although Hindu merchants of Singapore were mostly loyal to the Indian National Congress, there appears to have been very little direct contact with the Congress. The Indians in Malaya were interested mainly in their own economic welfare. Nevertheless, the pre-war Indian associations have been useful to the Japanese. Several of the Indians who were prominent in the old associations are today active in the Indian Independence Leagues. With the arrival of Bose in 1943 Malaya became the headquarters for League activity and a large number of the training programs for the newly-formed Indian National Army were located there.

Thailand

The majority of the five to ten thousand Indians in Thailand are merchants. Although numerous religious or cultural societies existed, it is doubtful whether more than a few belonged to Indian political organizations there prior to 1941. As a whole the Indians were not vitally interested in political developments in their homeland, and, although sympathetic with the Congress, they had no local branch in Thailand.

Japan's invasion of Thailand was probably regarded with apprehension by most Indians, but a few individuals in the community were ardent nationalists with records of subversive activities and imprisonments in India. The end of 1941 found them eager to take the lead in organizing their countrymen behind the Japanese program. One of these was Gianti Pritam Singh, who had been in Thailand since 1933.

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Another Indian revolutionary in Thailand when Japan entered the war was Amar Singh. During the last war he engaged in seditious activities in India and seems to have been involved in one of the various plots to obtain India's freedom with German aid. After his release from prison in India in 1940 he went to Thailand, where he joined forces with Gianti Pritam Singh. Together they started an anti-British movement in which they are said to have received help from the Japanese government. These two men probably formed the nucleus of what later became known as the Independent League of India. On 9 December 1941, they printed an appeal in the *Bangkok Times* asking all patriotic Indians to register their names and look to Japan to free India.

A third Indian who achieved considerable prominence during the early days of the war with Japan was Swami Satyananda Puri, one-time Professor of Philosophy at Calcutta University, who went to Thailand in 1932. There is no indication that he had any dealings with the Japanese prior to December 1941, nor does he seem to have been associated with Amar Singh and Gianti Pritam Singh. But on 22 December 1941 Swami Satyananda published in the *Bangkok Times* a notice of a meeting to inaugurate an Indian National Council for the Freedom of India. For some time the two groups, the Independent League of India and the Indian National Council for the Freedom of India, continued as separate organizations. The first appears to have been the more active, and some of its members achieved a certain amount of success among the soldiers of the British Indian army in Malaya after December 1941. Gianti Pritam Singh went to Malaya shortly after its fall and was instrumental in founding branches of the League there. Towards the end of March 1942 Swami Satyananda Puri and Gianti Pritam Singh were killed in a plane crash en route to Japan, and in May 1942 the Indian National Council and the Independent League merged.

However, the Indian community appears to have little enthusiasm for this Japanese-sponsored organization. The merchants of Thailand are said to be forced by threat of boycott to become members of the League and to contribute to its funds. Many of them are becoming Thai citizens apparently in order to avoid this pressure.

Indochina

In Indochina, where the Indians are a small group with almost exclusively commercial interests, the Independence League set up by the Japanese was received with passivity. Most of the Indians, and especially the Chettiars, or money-lenders, form a wealthy group which controls a considerable amount of land and trade. Hence they are not particularly concerned with India's political future.

China

Many cases of friction between the British and the small, compact group of Indians in China reveal the degree to which the Indians were

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organized and the enthusiasm they felt for the cause of Indian nationalism. A revolutionary movement, dating from the last war, fed by resentment against the British and influenced by Chinese nationalist activities, flourished in Shanghai. The roots of this movement lay not in present-day Indian nationalism with its creed of passive resistance and civil-disobedience, but in the political terrorism of earlier years. Recently, however, the growing influence of the Indian National Congress has modified the political attitudes and objectives of this group.

Before the last war, in both Hongkong and Shanghai there were *Chadr* (revolution) societies, affiliated with similar organizations on the west coast of the United States and elsewhere, which conspired for the overthrow of the British government in India.

The Kuomintang nationalist movement in China proved to be not only an inspiration to the Indian groups in Hongkong and Shanghai, but also a source of material assistance. In 1927 the Eastern Oppressed People's Association (EOPA) was organized in Hankow by a number of Kuomintang Chinese, Koreans, Filipinos, Japanese, and Indians. Its headquarters were later moved to Nanking where it functioned under the protection of the Kuomintang party, and its Indian section was reportedly maintained by donations from Chinese friends and members of the Kuomintang, because the Indians were too poor to contribute more than small sums. Another group, the Indian Youth League of China, had an agreement with the Kuomintang and Bureau of Public Safety, which enabled it to hold meetings and carry on political activity. In 1930 this group issued several manifestoes condemning British rule and calling upon all Indians to fight for a free Asia.

When the Japanese took over Shanghai and Hongkong they organized Indian Independence Leagues in both places. Many of the members in Hongkong were British Indian troops who were put under pressure either to enroll or be treated as regular prisoners of war. Some of these were trained by the Japanese to enter India as spies. As politically-trained Indians in China have long been sympathetic to the Kuomintang it is not surprising that little enthusiasm for the Japanese-sponsored Leagues has been reported.

Japan

Japan has a smaller Indian population than any other country in East Asia. Nevertheless the presence in Japan of a small group of ardent Indian revolutionaries and refugee patriots, and the fact that they have received support from the Japanese, made Japan one of the most important centers of Indian nationalist activities in East Asia before the war. Certain Japanese groups pursued the policy of actively encouraging revolutionary tendencies in Asiatic countries, especially those under European domination. The late Mitsuru Toyama, the original power behind Japanese secret patriotic societies and imperialist expansion in general, extended his patronage and protection. Several associations have

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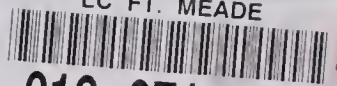
been devoted to the cause of Indian independence and the degree of organization for this purpose has surpassed anything achieved in other countries of East Asia.

The most prominent Indian in Japan today is Rash Behari Bose. He believes strongly that freedom for India can be obtained only with Japanese aid. While still a young man he became involved in the Indian revolutionary movement, and was probably one of those responsible for the attack on the Viceroy of India in 1912. From 1912-15 he directed terrorist activities in the Punjab, but when a number of the ringleaders were arrested, Bose fled to Japan. The Japanese Government ordered him to be deported, but he was protected by Mitsuru Toyama, and to avoid further trouble took out Japanese citizenship papers.

In 1931 Bose organized the first Indian Independence League, which announced as its object "the attainment of Independence for India by all possible means." Until the rise to power of Subhas Chandra Bose, in Burma, the elder Bose was the recognized leader of the network of Indian Independence Leagues throughout East Asia. In the last year Subhas Chandra Bose had taken over complete control of the Indian Independence League organizations and Rash Behari Bose has apparently retired.

A rival organization to Bose's Independence League, the Indian National Congress Committee of Japan, was organized in 1928, with A. M. Sahay as its leader. For some years it has published the *Voice of India*, in which Congress activities in India have been well covered, but the committee apparently has had no official connection with the Indian National Congress. Anand Mohan Sahay, the leader, is one of the few Indians in Japan who, while still in India, were ever closely connected with the Indian National Congress. In 1923 he settled in Japan to "work for the promotion of Indo-Japanese friendship and dissemination of correct information regarding India in Japan." The Japanese *Who's Who* for 1937 records him as an educator and writer on India, Japan, Asia, and international problems. He is said to be completely unscrupulous and insincere in political matters, and to be continually at odds with Bose.

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